

Tire Care Basics

Your tires play an important role in keeping you safe on the road. Adopting a few simple tire care and maintenance habits can help ensure that you are driving safely. Taking a few minutes every week to check your tires is quick and easy.

Maintaining proper tire air pressure is important for a number of reasons. Under-inflated tires are bad for handling and can even cause a crash. Improper tire inflation also causes tires to wear out faster and heat up more, which could trigger a dangerous high-speed blow-out. A tire can lose up to half of its air pressure and not appear to be flat!

Your owner's manual lists the recommended amount of air for your tires. You can also find this on the manufacturer's sticker located on the inside edge of the driver's door, inside the gas door or in your glove box. Every tire has a maximum tire inflation rating molded into the side of the tire. Never exceed the recommended tire pressure, or pounds per square inch (PSI). Do not use the maximum tire inflation rating to fill your tires – only use the vehicle manufacturer's recommended pressure.

According to on-the-road driving tests by both *Consumer Reports* and auto information site *Edmonds.com*, under-inflated tires reduce fuel economy, so proper inflation is key.

Tires must be replaced when the tread is worn down to 2/32 of an inch in order to prevent skidding and hydroplaning.

The Penny Test: Place a penny into a tread groove with Lincoln's head down. If part of Lincoln's head is covered by the tread, you're driving with the proper amount of tread. If you can see all of his head, you should buy new tires.

Misalignment of wheels in the front or rear can cause uneven and rapid tread wear. A bad jolt from hitting a curb or pothole can throw your front end out of alignment and damage your tires. Have a tire dealer check the alignment periodically to ensure that your car is properly aligned. If your vehicle is pulling to one side or shaking, it's time to get it checked!

Rotating tires promotes uniform tire wear. Regularly rotating your vehicle's tires will help you achieve more uniform wear.

Tire care is included as part of your vehicle's schedule. It is vitally important that you adhere to the maintenance schedule as prescribed by your owner's manual or your fleet leasing company.